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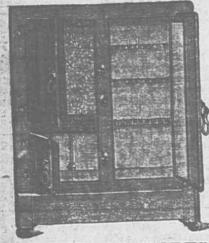
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Author of "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" (Continued from yesterday.)

lage. He is surely the best of sons,

"I suppose little Rodman is some

still he's of use, minding Mrs. Boyn-

ton and the house when Ivory's away.

for at his books and likely to be a

blessing, Waity, and I believe, any-

way, you're talking to keep my mind

"You mean we've each other? No, Patty, I never forget that, day or

bear any burden father chooses to put

upon us. Now the bread is set, but I

don't believe I have the courage to put

a needle into your tender fiesh, Patty.

'Tis that makes me willing to

The schoolteacher says he is wonder-

like to spoll his life." said Patty.

only ten?" Patty suggested.

out, so it seems.

or other."

off the earrings!"

I really don't."

to suit me!"

any time!",

village stores.

Baxter's store.

company.

and go out in the barn

"Have you got the pencil and the

needle and the waxed silk? Then

bring the camphor bottle to revive me,

and the coral pendants, too, just to

give me courage. Hurry up! It's 10

o'clock. I was born at sunrise, so I'm

'going on' eighteen and can't waste

Foxwell Baxter was ordinarily called

"Old Fory" by the boys of the district

and also, it is to be feared, by the men

gathered for evening conference at the

various taverns, or at one of the rival

He had a small farm of fifteen or

twenty acres, with a pasture, a wood

lot and a hayfield, but the principal

source of his income came from trad-

ing. His sign bore the usual legend,

"West India Goods and Groceries,"

and probably the most profitable ar-

ticles in his stock were rum, mo-

lasses, sugar and tobacco, but there

were chests of rice, tea, coffee and

spices, barrels of pork in brine, as well

as piles of cotton and woolen cloth

on the shelves above the counter. His

shop window, seldem dusted or set in

order, held a few clay pipes, some

lozenges, black licotice, stick candy

and sugar gooseberries. These dain-

ties were seldom renewed, for it was

only a very bold child or one with an

would have spent his penny at Foxy

He was thought a sharp and shrewd

tioned, indeed, the only trait in his

character that ever came up for gen-

unbelievable, colossal meanness. This

so eclipsed every other passion in the

man and loomed so bulkily and insis-

tently in the foreground that had he

have observed it, and if he really did

possess a casual virtue it could scarce-

ly have reared its heed in such ugly

It might be said, to defend the fair

fame of the church, that Mr. Baxter's

deaconhood did not include very active

service in the courts of the Lord. He

age of twenty-five he was selected to

will see or hear us."

"We can't! The Lord couldn't expect | her away from the gossip of the vilus to bear all we bear," exclaimed Patty. "without our trying once in a livery Roymton." while to have a good time in our own way. We never do a thing that we are



"We can't! The Lord couldn't expect us to bear all that we bear."

ashamed of or that other girls don't do every day in the week; only our pleasures always have to be taken be or screech more than I can help. We'll hind father's back. It's only me that's make a ting lead pencil dot right in the ever wrong, anyway, for you are always an angel. It's a burning shame, and you only twenty-one yourself. I'll pierce your ears if you say so and let you wear your own coral drops?"

"No, Patty! I've outgrown those longings years ago. When your mother died and left father and you and the house to me my girlhood died, too, though I was only fourteen."

"It was only your inside girlhood that died." insisted Patty stoutly. "The outside is as fresh as the paint on Uncle Barty's new ell. You've gotthe loveliest eyes and hair in River boro, and you know it; besides, Ivory chided Waftstill. "for it will never last Boynton would tell you so if you didn't. you. Come, we'll take the workbasket Come and bore my ears, there a a darling!"

"Ivory Boynton never speaks a word of my looks, nor a word that father and all the world mightn't hear." And Waitstill flushed,

"Then it's because he's shy and silent and has so many troubles of his own that he doesn't dare say anything. When my hair is once up and the coral pendants are swinging in my ears I shall expect to hear something about my looks, I can tell you. Waity, after all, though we never have what we want to est and never a decent dress to our backs, nor a young man, to cross the threshold. I wouldn't change places with Ivory Boynton, would you?" Here Patty swept the hearth vigorously with a turkey wing and added a few corncobs to the fire.

Waitstill paused a moment in her task of bread kneading. "Well," she answered critically, "at least we know where our father is."

"We do indeed. We also know that he is thoroughly alive."

"And, though people do talk about him, they can't say the things they say of Master Auron Boynton. I don't believe father would ever run away and

desert us." "I fear not," said Patty. "I wish the angels would put the idea into his head, though, of course, it wouldn't be the angels. They'd be above it. It would have to be the 'old driver,' as Jed Morrill calls the evil one. But whoever did it the result would be the same-we should be deserted and live happily ever after. Oh, to be deserted and left with you alone on this hilltop, what joy it would be!"

CHAPTER II.

Descon Baxter's Wives. AITSTILL frowned, but did not interfere further with Patty's intemperate speech. She knew that she was simply serving as an escape valve and that after the steam was "let off" she cherished a second vice no one would

would be more rational. "Of course we are motherless," continued Patty wistfully. "but poor Ivory

is worse than motherless." "No, not worse, Patty," said Waitstill, taking the bread board and moving toward the closet. "Ivory loves his mother, and she loves him with all the mind she has left. She has the had "experienced religion" at fifteen best blood of New England flowing in her veins, and I suppose it was a great all well brought up boys and girls did comedown for her to marry Agron the same in those days—their parents Boynton, clever and gifted though he saw to that! If change of conviction was. Now Ivory has to protect her- or backsliding occurred later on that poor, daft. innocent creature-and hide was not their business! At the ripe

incessant spying on his neighbors was particularly in his line, but for many years now, though he had been regular in attendance at church, he had never officiated at communion and his dencount services had gradually lapsed into the passing of the contribution box, a task of which he never wearled, it was such a keen pleasure to make other people yield their pennies for a good cause without adding his own! Dencon Baxter had now been a wid-

crame," since any defense of the creed that included lively detective work and

ower for nine years, and the community had almost relinquished the idea of his seeking a fourth wife. This was a matter of some regret, for there was a general feeling that it would be a good thing for the Baxter girls to have some one to help with the housework and act as a buffer between them and their grim and irascible parent. As for the women of the village, they were mortifed that the Deacon had been able to secure three wives and refused to beleve that the universe held anywhere a creature benighted enough to become his fourth.

The first, be it said, was a mere ignoant girl. and he a beardless youth of twenty, who may not have shown his true qualities so early in life. She bore him two sons, and it was a matter of comment at the time that she called them, respectively, Job and Moses, hoping that the endurance and meekness connected with these names might "She is a terrible care for him and somehow help them in their future relations with their father. Pneumonia, "There are cares that swell the heart coupled with profound discouragement, ind make it bigger and warmer. Patty. carried her off in a few years to make ust as there are cares that shrivel it room for the second wife, Waftstill's and leave it tired and cold. Love lightmother, who was of different fiber and ens Ivory's uffictions, but that is greatly his superior. She was a fine. something you and I have to do withhandsome girl, the orphan daughter of up country gentlefolks who had died when she was eighteen, leaving her comfort to the Boyntons, even if he is alone in the world and penniless.

Baxter, after a few days' acquaint-"No doubt. He's a good little felnnce, drove into the dooryard of the low, and, though it's rather bard for house where she was a visitor and, Ivory to be burdened for these last five showing her his two curly headed boys, years with the support of a child suddenly asked her to come and be who's no nearer kin than a cousin. their stepmother. She assented, partly because she had nothing else to do with her existence so far as she could see, and also because she fell in love with the children at first sight and forgreat credit to the Boyntons some day got, as girls will, that it was their father whom she was marrying. "You've forgot to name our one great

She was as plucky and clever and spirited as she was handsome, and she made a brave fight of it with Foxy, eyes long enough to bring a daughter into the world, to name her Waitstill and start her a little way on her life journey-then she too, gave up the struggle and died. Typhoid fever it was, combined with complete loss of illuslons and a kind of despairing rage at having made so complete a failure of her existence,

"Nonsense! I've got the waxed silk The next year Mr. Baxter, being unall ready and chosen the right sized usually busy, offered a man a good needle, and I'll promise not to jump young helfer if he would jog about the country a little and pick him up a housekeeper, a likely woman who middle of the lobe, then you place the would it she proved energetic, economneedle on it, shut your eyes and jab ical and amiable be eventually raised hard! I expect to faint, but when 1 to the proud position of his wife. If come to we can decide which of us she was young, healthy, smart, tidy, will pull the needle through to the capable and a good manager, able to other side. Probably it will be you. milk the cows, harness the horse and I'm such a coward. If it hurts dreadmake good butter he would give a dolfully I'll have only one pierced today let and a balf a week. The woman was found, and, incredible as it may and take the other tomorrow, and if it barts very dreadfully perhaps I'll go seem, she said "Yes" when the deacon, whose arder was kindled at having through life with one earring. Aunt paid three months' wages, proposed a Abby Cole will say it's just odd enough speedy marriage. The two boys by "You'll never go through life with one tongue at the rate you use it now," flerward; while the other, a reckless and unhappy lad, was drowned while running on the logs in the river. Old "Goody, goody! Come along!" and Fory showed little outward sign of his Patty clapped her hands in triumph.

> His third wife, the one originally se- ing. cured for a housekeeper, bore him a still's delight at this addition to the bright eyed baby, who speedily became nessed three most contented deaths in never came. the Baxter house. The ladies were all with the deacon.

glass jars of peppermint or sassafras "I know I hadn't ought to put the care on you, Waitstill, and you only budding things and sniffed their frafourteen." poor Mrs. Baxter sighed, as grance. the young girl was watching with her ungovernable appetite for sweets who one night when the end seemed drawdress herself and help round, but i'm make you a fresh cup of tea." trader, but his honesty was never ques- all beat out and can't try any more."

"Do you mean I'm to take your place, be a mother to Patience and keep eral discussion was his extraordinary, house and everything?" asked Waitstill quaveringly.

"I don't see but you'll have to, unless your father marries again. He'll never hire belp, you know that!"

house," flashed the girl. "There's been fire, waking it to a brilliant flame. three here and that's enough! If be if he leaves me alone I'll wash and meal. iron and scrub and cook till Patience and made profession of his faith, but with me? Do you think anybody will ever want me?"

Your own mother did that and so did ed?" I, and we were both punished for it! thinking it might be good for trade as a sight of comfort out of the haby. it was, for some years. He was very but I wouldn't so through it again, not Canada now number shout 3,000.

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even for her! You're real smart and capable for your age, and you've done your fall share of the work every day, even when you were at school. You

can get along all right." "I don't know how I'm going to do everything alone," said the girl, forcing back her tears. "You've always made the brown bread, and mine will never suit father. I suppose I can wash, but I don't know how to fron starched clothes, nor make pickles, and oh! I can never kill a rooster. mother, it's no use to ask me to! I'm not big enough to be the head of the family.

Mrs. Baxter turned her pale, thred face away from Waitstill's appealing

"I know." she said faintly. "I hate to leave you to bear the brunt alone. but I must! * * . Take good care of Patience and don't let her get into trouble. * * * You won't, will you?"

"T'll be careful," promised Waitstill, mobbing quietly. "I'll do my best." "You've got more courage than ever I had; don't you s'pose you can stiffen up and defend yourself a little mite?

Your father'd ought to be opposed, for his own good, but I've never seen anybody that dared do it." Then, after a pause, she said with a fiash of spirit, "Anyhow, Waitstill, he's your father after all. He's no blood relation of mine, and I can't stand him another day; that's the reason I'm willing to

Ivory Boynton lifted the bars that divided his land from the highroad and walked slowly toward the house. It was April, but there were still patches of snow here and there, fast melting under a drizzling rain. It was a gray world, a bleak, black and brown world, this time had reached the age of dis- above and below. The sky was leaden: cretion, and one of them evinced the the road and the footpath were deep fact by promptly running away to in a muddy coze flecked with white. parts unknown, never to be heard from The tree trunks, black, with bare brat gray sky; nevertheless, spring had been on the way for a week, and a few sunny days would bring the yearly miracle for which all hearts were long-

Ivory was season wise, and his quick girl, very much to his disgust, a girl eye had caught many a sign as he named Patience, and great was Walt- walked through the woods from his schoolhouse. A new and different color dull household. The mother was a haunted the tree tops, and one had only timid. colorless, docile creature, but to look closely at the elm buds to see Patience nevertheless was a sparkling, that they were beginning to swell. Some fat robins had been bouncing the very center of the universe to the about in the schoolyard at noon, and older child. So the months and years the sparrows had been chirping and wore on dreamly enough until when twittering on the fence rails. Yes, the Patience was eight the third Mrs. winter was over, and Ivory was glad. Barter succumbed after the manner of for it had meant no consting and skather predecessors and slipped away ing and sleighing for him, but long from a life that had grown intolerable, walks in deep snow or slush, long even-The trouble was diagnosed as "liver ings, good for study, but short days complaint," but scarcity of proper and greater loneliness for his mother. food, no new frocks or kind words. He could see her now as he neared the hard work and continual bullying may house, standing in the open doorway, possibly have been contributory causes. her hand shading her eyes, watching, Dr. Perry thought so, for he had wit- always watching, for some one who

"Spring is on the way, mother, but it members of the church and had pre-sumably made their peace with God, the rain." he called. "Look at the nosebut the good doctor funcied that their gay I gathered for you as I came pleasure in joining the angels was mild through the woods. Here are passy compared with their relief at parting willows and red maple blossoms and mayflowers, would you believe it?" Lois Boynton took the hundful of

"You're late tonight, Ivory," she said.

"Red wanted his supper early so that ing near. "I've made out to live till be could go off to singing school, but I now when Patience is old enough to kept something warm for you, and I'll

CHAPTER III.

Something of a Hero. VORY went into the little shed room eff the kitchen, changed his muder boots for slippers and made himself geherally tidy, then he came back to the living room bring "I won't have another mother in this ing a pine knot which he flung on the

"We can be as lavish as we like with brings anybody home I'll take Pa- the stumps now, mother, for spring is tience and run away, as Job did, or coming," he said, as he sat down to his

"I've been looking out more that grows up, and then we'll go off to- usual this afternoon," she replied gether and hide somewhere. I'm four- "There's hardly any snow left, and teen. Oh, mother, how soon could I though the walking is so bad I've been be married and take Patience to live rather expecting your father before night. You remember he said when he went away in danuary that be should "Don't marry for a home, Waitstill! be back before the marris wers bloom

(To be continued.)

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